What is claimed is:

1. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition, comprising:

(a) a rheology modifying polymer composition polymerized from a monomer composition comprising at least one unsaturated (di)carboxylic acid containing monomer having a total of from 3 to about 10 carbon atoms or anhydrides thereof, or at least one half ester monomer of said unsaturated (di)carboxylic acid with an alkanol having from 1 to about 4 carbon atoms, or combinations thereof; a cross-linking agent; and optionally one or more oxygen-containing comonomers having from 3 to about 40 carbon atoms;

(b) nifedipine as an active ingredient;

(c) one or more excipients; and

(d) optionally, a surface active agent and a solubility enhancer and mixtures thereof.

2. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said carboxylic acid monomer is a monocarboxylic acid monomer selected from acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, crotonic acid, and mixtures thereof.

3. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said carboxylic acid monomer is a dicarboxylic acid monomer selected from itaconic acid, fumaric acid, maleic acid, aconitic acid, and mixtures thereof.

4. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said half ester monomer of said unsaturated dicarboxylic acid is monomethyl fumarate.

5. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said one or more oxygen-containing comonomers is selected from a $C_1$ to $C_{30}$ alkyl ester or half ester of a carboxylic acid or a dicarboxylic acid.

6. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said anhydride of said carboxylic acid monomer is maleic anhydride.

7. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 5 wherein said one or more oxygen-containing comonomers is selected from ethyl acrylate, butyl acrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, dodecyl acrylate, hexadecyl acrylate, octadecyl acrylate, and mixtures thereof.

8. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said monomer composition further comprises a $C_1$ to $C_{20}$ alkyl vinyl ether.

9. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 8 wherein said alkyl vinyl ether is selected from ethyl vinyl ether and methyl vinyl ether.

10. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein the amount of one or more unsaturated (di)carboxylic acid monomers, anhydrides and half esters thereof, or combinations thereof in said polymerizable monomer composition are present in the amount of from about 60% to about 99.99% by weight, based upon the total weight of all rheology modifying polymer forming monomers.

11. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said crosslinker is selected from allyl ethers of sucrose, pentaerythritol, propylene, polyol derivatives, and mixtures thereof.

12. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said crosslinker is selected from diallylphthalate, divinyl glycol, divinyl benzene, allyl (meth)acrylate, ethylene glycol di(meth)acrylate, diallyl itaconate, diallyl fumarate, or diallyl maleate, and mixtures thereof.

13. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said crosslinker in said polymerizable monomer composition is present in the amount of from about 0.01 to about 3.5 parts by weight based upon the total weight of all rheology modifying polymer forming monomers.

14. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 1 wherein said excipient is selected from fillers, binders, colorants, coating agents, lubricants, surface active agents and said solubility enhancers, glidants, dispersants, slow release compounds and mixtures thereof.

15. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 14 wherein said excipient is selected from microcrystalline cellulose, talc, lactose, lactose monohydrate, saccharose, sorbitol, mannitol, starch, cellulose, magnesium stearate, tricalcium phosphate, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, and mixtures thereof.

16. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition of claim 14 wherein said surface active agent and said solubility enhancer are selected from polyethylene glycol, sodium lauryl sulfate, sodium, potassium or magnesium n-dodecyl sulfate, n-tetradecylsulfate, n-hexadecyl sulfate, n-tetradecyloxyethyl sulfate, n-hexadecyloxyethyl sulfate, n-octadecyloxyethyl sulfate, sodium, potassium or magnesium n-dodecanesulfonate; sodium, potassium or magnesium n-tetradecanesulfonate, n-hexadecanesulfonate, n-octadecanesulfonate, sorbitan monolaurate, sorbitan monooleate, sorbitan monostearate, sorbitan monopalmitate, sorbitan tri-stearate or trioleate, polyethylene glycol fatty acid ester such as polyoxyethyl stearate, polyethylene glycol 600 stearate, polyoxyethylene alkyl ethers, polyoxyethylene castor oil derivatives, sorbitan polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters, polyoxyethylene fatty acid esters, polyoxyethylene stearates, and mixtures thereof.

17. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet comprising the composition of claim 1.

18. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet comprising the composition of claim 14.

19. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet comprising the composition of claim 15.

20. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet having a coating thereon.

21. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet of claim 20 wherein said coating comprises a polymer selected from , cellulose acylate, cellulose acetate, cellulose diacylate, cellulose diacetate, cellulose triacylate, cellulose triacetate, mono-, di-, and tri-cellulose alkanylate, mono-, di- and tri-alkenylates, mono-, di- and tri-aroylates, cellulose trivalerate, cellulose trilaurate, cellulose tripalmitate, cellulose trioctanoate, cellulose tripropionate, cellulose diesters, cellulose disuccinate, cellulose dipalmitate, cellulose dioctanoate, cellulose dicarpylate, cellulose actate heptonate, cellulose valerate palmitate, cellulose acetate octonoate, cellulose propionate succinate, cellulose acetate valerate, cellulose acetaldehyde, dimethyl cellulose acetate, cellulose acetate ethylcarbamate, semipermeable polyamylsulfanes, semipermeable urethane, cellulose acetate methylcarbamate, cellulose dimethylaminoacetate, semipermeable sulfonated polystyrenes, semipermeable silicone rubbers, semipermeable styrenes, sulfonated polystyrenes, polyurethanes, polydiethylaminomethylstyrene, cellulose acetate methylcarbamate, ethylcellulose, shellac, polymethylstyrene, polyvinylacetate, semipermeble (polysodium styrenesulfonate), and semipermeable poly(vinylbenzymtrimethyl ammonium chloride).

22. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine tablet comprising the composition of claim 16.

23. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition comprising the composition of claim 1 in the form of granules.

24. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition comprising the composition of claim 14 in the form of granules.

25. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition comprising the composition of claim 15 in the form of granules.

26. A sustained release solid dosage nifedipine composition comprising the composition of claim 16 in the form of granules.